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hostility to the Military Administration and, after it, to the civil Governments of the Malayan Union and Singapore which succeeded it. 668

Before the war, the Kuomintang had found its chief support in the mercantile class of Chinese. During the Japanese occupation of the Nanyang this class, being urban and static, was an easy prey for Japanese exactions and for this reason its members, after the liberation, were denounced by the Communists as 'collaborators'. They, themselves, had either remained underground and unnoticed because of their lack of property or, in Malaya, in the case of about 3,000–4,000 only out of a total population of over two million, had become guerrillas in the jungle. The post-liberation result of the situation in this country was that many of the old leaders of the Chinese community were, at least temporarily, discredited and the Communists claimed credit for all resistance to the Japanese. After a while, however, the Kuomintang and the San Min Chu I Youth began to reassert themselves, but they had lost much of their pre-war vigour. The course of the civil war in China and the deterioration of the National Government's position had much to do with the change.

In Indonesia and Indochina, where the purely proletarian element among the Chinese was much smaller, the developments after the Japanese had surrendered placed the Chinese in an unenviable position. In Indonesia the 'middleman' nature of so much of the Chinese activity had made them unpopular with the natives, and during the periods after 1945 when the Dutch were in conflict with the Indonesian Republic neither side was able to afford them adequate protection from the aggression of local communities. Uncontrolled elements in the population (often soldiers) massacred the Chinese in considerable numbers. They were, in particular, accused of espionage for the Dutch. It seems, however, that it was the Dutch who afforded them the best protection and with whom, generally speaking, Chinese sympathies therefore lay. In Indochina, where there was also a considerable animus against the Chinese trader and money-lender (i.e. goods-lender), the community suffered greatly in the disorders and in the civil war which was still continuing in 1949. The French, to afford them protection, and to suit their own strategic dispositions, concentrated them in a few centres, notably in Saigon-Cholon where there was much overcrowding. At the same time many other Chinese 609 186 6068

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668 moved to Vietminh-controlled areas, and the Vietminh could
609 claim a considerable number of supporters among the younger Chinese.

186 The advances of militant nationalism in some others of the Southeast Asian countries had made the widespread fear of Chinese economic encroachment a ready source of political capital. In both Siam and the Philippines measures to diminish the Chinese share of the retail trade which had been initiated before the war were now intensified and an anti-Chinese plank was inevitable in the platform of every political party. Chinese Communists were said meanwhile to be actively assisting the Hukbalahaps, the agrarian insurgents in Luzon.

668 This was the dilemma in which the Chinese still found them-
669 selves in the fourth year after the Japanese defeat. But in one country, Malaya, their difficulties as a community became most acute when the Malayan Communist Party, consisting itself mostly of Chinese, decided in June 1948 to start an active terrorist campaign against the British. The constitutional experiment of the Malayan Union followed by that of the Federation of Malaya had left the Chinese generally in a state of political apathy (since the new constitution greatly favoured the Malays at their expense). When the terrorists, who were largely the old guerrillas of the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army, struck, it was the Chinese themselves who provided most of the casualties on both sides. Many *Towkays* (Chinese business men) were intimidated into contributing to the Communists' funds or supplying them with goods and, being largely isolated, were not in a position to resist these demands. This in turn brought them into conflict with the British authorities. The Chinese squatter community, too, being on the fringe of the jungle was readily utilized by the terrorists and suffered accordingly when British troops and police took reprisals against their villages, burning down their houses and destroying
000 their crops. Many squatters were banished to China. The great danger the British ran was that harsh measures might antagonize large sections of the population, for the government of a great majority by a small minority must ultimately depend upon the consent of the governed. Large-scale measures of varying success were in progress against the terrorists in 1949 when the defeat of the Chinese Nationalist armies by those of the Communists in China and the collapse of the Kuomintang Government gave new

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Billiton, among the bauxite deposits of the Rhio Archipelago off Singapore, and finally among the oil wells of Palembang in Sumatra.

The Chinese of the Philippines form a group somewhat isolated from the main body, so to speak. They have traded with and emigrated to these islands for some centuries and they persevered

The Hakkas often inhabit the same areas as the Cantonese, Hokkien, and other tribes.

The following authorities, among others, have been followed: (1) Linguistic Map of China, *The Geographical Journal*, vol. cii, no. 2 (August 1943) p. 5; (2) Ta Chen, op. cit. p. 23; (3) W. J. Cator, *The Economic Position of the Chinese in the Netherlands Indies* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1936) p. 28 (map).

in their intercourse in spite of the intermittent severity and grudging tolerance of the Spanish. When, however, in 1898 the Americans assumed control of the islands, they extended to them the exclusion laws against Chinese immigration which were already in force in the United States. When the Filipinos took over the administration of their own country the term 'exclusion' (which had been subject at least to some liberal exceptions under the Americans) was more and more literally interpreted. But although

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609 167 162 their numbers are at present not very great in comparison with the Filipinos, the economic position of the Chinese in the Philippines based, as ever, on their control of trade (they owned, before 1941 at least, three-quarters of the rice-mills), has been maintained in the face of determined attempts by Filipino Nationalists to oust them from it.

121 So much will serve as a general introductory survey of the distribution of the Chinese in Southeast Asia: in the first chapter of each country study contained in the successive parts of this survey, the subject will be dealt with in much greater detail.

167 162 The sketch-map of the principal places of origin in China of the Chinese in Southeast Asia, reproduced on p. 9, has been designed by the author and executed by Geographia Ltd., and is subject to the following considerations. The shading indicates roughly the distribution in China of the several tribes represented overseas, but in the case of the Hakkas, of whom small communities are to be found throughout Kwangtung intermingled with the Cantonese,[1] only the areas most densely populated by them are shown in the map. Nor must it be assumed that the overseas Chinese come equally from all over the shaded areas. The fact (as Dr Ta Chen has pointed out) is that the communities from which the emigrants are drawn exist side by side with non-emigrant communities, and enjoy a higher standard of living than the latter.

[1] See L. Richard, *Comprehensive Geography of the Chinese Empire and Dependencies* (Shanghai, Tu-se-wei Press, 1908) p. 207.

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Chinese
Indians

464 years of the present century, the flow of immigration has been large and
167 comparatively steady except during the depression and the two world wars. Chinese and Indian immigrants usually could better their position soon after arrival because their industry and organization were superior to those of the indigenous peoples. Partly because of this, there were constantly new arrivals willing to do coolie work until they too could
[178] rise economically. Except for the large-scale repatriations to China and India caused by the depression, the flow of labor thus set into motion was adequate for the economy prevailing in the underpopulated areas until changing conditions created a growing class of landless proletariat and
[668] dissatisfaction among both the indigenous and immigrant peoples. This dissatisfaction often became associated with other motivations in nationalist movements.

Controlled migrations occurred only between regions under the same government or those held by governments of the same nationality, except for a limited migration of Javanese labor to Malaya (and to New Caledonia). In the Netherlands Indies and in Indochina the governments
[166] endeavored to transplant groups of laborers from overpopulated to underpopulated areas, but in so doing they learned that the process required careful organization, was expensive, and raised serious economic, social, and psychological problems. Such movements could be effected successfully on a limited scale only. This fact obviated the possibility of their contributing substantially to solution of the problem of overpopulation. As labor supply, such migrations were only temporarily satisfactory, because social and religious ties inclined the workers to return to their home villages immediately upon the expiration of their contracts or even to desert. To stabilize this labor force some of the governments tried after the depression to obtain a better adjusted sex ratio in the migrant population by encouraging the immigration of workers' families and the establishment of agricultural villages—a program too recently initiated to make possible a definite appraisal of its comparative success or failure. In Malaya, with the exception of a few Javanese, planned immigration was confined to Indian laborers. It was arranged and operated jointly by the two British governments concerned. There, however, the depression, the growth in voluntary Indian immigration, and India's ban in 1938 on assisted emigration to Malaya tended to render many of the official controls unnecessary. The unplanned and uncontrolled movement of labor across the Burma-India frontier was the sole migration of its type in Southeast Asia.

563 The indigenous populations in general hold themselves socially aloof
• 609 from the alien Asiatics. To the Muslim Malays the Chinese were materialistic, pork-eating idolators; and the Indians, with the exception of the small Islamic minority, were similarly disdained, though regarded as less aggressive. To the sinicized Annamites, the Burmese, and the Siamese,

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religion was no barrier between themselves and the Chinese; all were Buddhists, though of differing sects. Chinese culture had long been admired by the peoples of Farther India, and had influenced them. Moreover, the Chinese were regarded as distant and desirable relatives. With the advent, however, of Chinese women and the accelerated growth of Chinese nationalism after the first world war, intermarriage occurred less frequently (though it continued to be common in Burma and Cambodia), and the indigenous peoples had few social contacts with the Chinese in their midst. The cleavage between the ethnic groups was further widened in the British colonies by the official policy of representation of various communities on legislative and advisory bodies.

Economically, relations between the indigenous and the immigrant peoples altered from a mosaic of non-conflicting occupations to one of rapidly increasing competition. For years the native peoples had contentedly seen the arrival of thousands of immigrants annually who were able and willing to perform the hard labor for which they themselves had neither inclination nor compulsion. Through much of the region, however, during the inter-war period an indigenous proletariat was developing as a result of the transfer of farm land from the indebted native peasantry to non-agriculturists, often to alien moneylenders, and also because of the growth of a Western-inspired individualism which was weakening family ties once paramount. The trend was apparent chiefly in parts of Burma, Siam, and Indochina.

This development did not assume significant proportions until the world economic depression, when considerable unemployment arose out of the drop in prices and the curtailment of foreign markets for products of Southeast Asia. The result was a swift increase in the number of natives seeking to return to their villages and, on the other hand, of those forced to seek part-time or full-time employment away from their villages in competition with immigrant laborers for work previously scorned as arduous, monotonous, and underpaid.

Meanwhile the native middle classes for the first time faced a serious unemployment problem. Until the depression years, the opportunities for desirable though moderately paid employment in government or business had seemed to exceed the number of qualified candidates. The depression made it clear that the saturation point had been reached, and each year an increasing number of educated youths would be thwarted in their expectation of employment or, if given a job, in their rise to higher positions. Thus two groups of economically frustrated natives developed simultaneously in numbers and in consciousness in the decade prior to the second world war.

Nascent political factors became significant during that period. The struggles of the Chinese against the Japanese and of Indians against British rule were reflected in the attitudes of the emigrants from those coun-

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427 But the alien planta-
565 tions and even alien smallholders have threatened to grasp at it, and the
177 advances of Western medicine, so beneficial in many ways, have only accelerated the rate of increase of the population which has to seek a livelihood from it. In most parts of South East Asia the peasant is the actual owner of the land he tills, often legally under some agreement with
426 the State. But his rights to the produce are often severely limited by a heavy burden of indebtedness. The real effects of this may be less than people sometimes think, because when the debts are spread among neighbours and kinsfolk interest may be waived, repayment is sometimes protracted or ignored, and the debt may be serviced by other than material means. But there is no doubt that the peasant producer is badly hampered by his debt load. It is most pressing when debt is contracted to a member of an alien ethnic group, an Indian or a Chinese, for whom the transaction is a purely commercial one.

563 The role of alien Asiatic ethnic groups is one of the most significant
565 features in the economic and political life of the peasantry of South East
177 Asia today. For many centuries, Indian and Chinese trading influences
178 have met in the South East Asian region, and Indian religious concepts
439 have penetrated deep into many of its social systems. But for more than four hundred years the dominant commercial and political note has tended to be sounded by Europeans. Now the balance is altering. Colonialism may have set the modern structure of South East Asian society, but the patterns will persist when the colonial Powers have withdrawn. To this new society the Chinese above all have the economic key. In Indo-China, Siam, Malaya, the Philippines, and Java, the Chinese have penetrated the economic system and taken over crucial functions. They have shared in much of the wholesale import trade, they have attained pre-eminence in retailing vital imported goods to the peasant, and they act as middlemen for the collection, storage, and processing of peasant export products. As part of this process they often finance the peasant producer by advances on his crop, gaining a double profit by giving part of these advances in goods, not cash. The Chinese achievement has been remarkable. They have been kept on the margin both of the peasant society with which they deal, and of the European society with which at a later stage their growing wealth would allow them to associate. Though lacking any formal political power, which in the Orient as elsewhere is so often the passport to success, they have built up a trading structure of extraordinary toughness, elasticity, and elaboration.

565 The wider political implications of this are not my concern here. But
● 609 it is important to note three points in connexion with the peasant theme.
186 One is the xenophobic reaction of the local urban dwellers and of peasants
578 too, which has periodically found expression against the Chinese, as traders or residents in South East Asia, in the form of riots and other disturbances.
563 Another is the reaction of the Chinese, whose economic strength has given
241 them confidence, and who are now prepared to stand by their claim to a

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real stake in the countries of the Nan Yang, as settled members of the local society, and not as aliens. The third point is that the Chinese community has never been one of middlemen only; there has always been a fair proportion of cultivators within it. The poor peasantry of South East Asia now includes a Chinese as well as an indigenous element. The 1947 census of Malaya shows 45,000 Chinese engaged in rice growing, and another 100,000 in market gardening and fishing, essentially peasant pursuits.

The pressure to which the South East Asian peasant has been subjected by the combination of Western and other alien influences has been severe. But we must beware lest we misinterpret it. In a recent book which gives a comparative analysis of the agrarian situation in the countries of South East Asia, appears a striking statement about Malaya—that development of mining and rubber industries has pushed the native Malay population more and more towards the east, into the areas of the former Unfederated Malay States: 'The Malays', it is said, 'considered the east as safe from Western penetration, and therefore preferred this undeveloped area to the irrigated lands on the western coast, mainly because there they could get only temporary land licences, since a complete survey of all potential tin-bearing regions had not yet been made'.[1]

It is true that the eastern States are predominantly Malay in population, and that the greater part of the vast immigrant population of Malaya is densely settled on the western side of the peninsula, where the resources are richer and access easier than on the eastern side. It is also true that there has been some lack of enthusiasm among Malay peasants to colonize the new Government-developed irrigation areas, for complex reasons, including lack of capital in the past, and disinclination to move from their ancestral homes. But it is quite incorrect to put these facts together and to argue that the Malay has been pushed by alien pressure over from the west to the east of the peninsula. Apart from some seasonal movement for rice harvesting or fishing, the internal migration of Malays is inconsiderable, despite the rapid development of communications in recent years. Both the 1931 and the 1947 census show that whatever movement takes place—well under 10 per cent—is almost wholly from one State to another, either on the west coast or on the east coast, or to Singapore. Hardly any movement at all occurs from the west to the east. Moreover, the 1947 census shows that between 1931 and 1947 the Malay population of the western States increased by about one-third, at a rate slightly higher than that of the eastern States. The proportion of Malays in these western States, in terms of the total population of all ethnic groups, also increased slightly during this period, due primarily to the decline of Indians and Indonesians. In other words, though foreign economic penetration has immersed the western Malay in a flood of alien elements, it has not driven him away. On the contrary, he has preferred to stay and await events.

[1] Erich H. Jacoby, *Agrarian Unrest in Southeast Asia* (New York, Colombia University Press, 1949) p. 113.